

Hell is Closer Than You Think

Jordan's POV

I wake up groggy, before my alarm sounds and quickly switch it off, so that the noise doesn't disturb Sarah or my father Maxwell. I yawn as I stretch, feeling the kinks in my back from the springs of the threadbare mattress that dug into me overnight and left their marks on me. The one blanket that I have I carefully fold and put on the mattress on the floor, before I make my way into the dingy bathroom that is a part of the basement, where I sleep.

I don't have time to spend daydreaming in the shower and I'm quick, the water freezing cold. I hate cold showers with a passion but my father has cut the hot water off from working down here as part of my continuous punishments. I brush my teeth and hop out of the shower, turning the water off and wrapping a towel around me. It barely ts around my body, due to my larger size. I shiver and head back to my bedroom, if one could call it that, and quickly grab my usual clothes. Jeans, a sweatshirt and an oversize hoody. I knew it wouldn't matter, that the kids at school would still tease me but I wasn't comfortable in skin tight clothing and preferred to hide my body whenever I could.

I dress and then walk upstairs, heading into the kitchen. I'm quick to get breakfast on and my father comes walking in with a erce frown on his face. As the Gamma he gets up early to train and it's my responsibility to make sure breakfast is cooked every morning. He sniffs the air, the smell of bacon drifting towards him and relaxes slightly, sitting down at the table with a grunt.

"Good morning father" I said meekly, greeting him politely.

He barely acknowledged me as he stared down at the table. I quickly loaded up his plate with bacon, eggs, hashbrowns and toast, bringing it to him. I fetched a cup of coffee and slid that in front of him too. He began to eat, quickly and quietly as I loaded another plate up with fresh fruit and toast. Sarah would not eat the bacon and other delicious food I had made as she would deem them to be too fatty for her gure. I could feel my mouth watering and my stomach growling as the leftover food sat there.

Sarah came walking in, a smirk on her face. Her face was perfectly made up as usual, and she wore trendy, fashionable clothes. Her skirt was short and her t-shirt was cropped, showing off her taut stomach. It was hard not to feel as big as an elephant in comparison to her and judging by the smile on her face, she knew exactly what kind of effect she was having on me. She raised an eyebrow and sat at the table, just as father nished chewing the last bit of his food.

"Hurry up" she snapped at me impatiently, waving her hand and looking annoyed "I have to get to school you know. My friends are waiting for me" she added with a sneer "unlike you who has nobody in school. Pathetic" she said with a shake of her head.

My father remained silent. He got up from the table, pushing his chair back in. He was dressed casually for training and grabbed his jacket. It was cold outside, you could see the fog from the window and the dew on the leaves of the trees if you looked closely enough. Looking at Sarah, I had no clue how she wasn't freezing to death.

"I'll be home at my usual time" father grunted, before bending down to kiss Sarah on the forehead. Such a simplistic gesture, but one that never failed to bring tears to my eyes. She closed her eyes and leaned her head against him in a show of affection. God, it hurt. Hurt so bad that my chest felt like it was on re. Why couldn't he look at me like that? Just once, I would have loved to have had him kiss me the same way he kissed her. Like a loving parent. It was just another ultimate reminder of how much he hated me. I looked away, as he straightened himself back up and headed for the front door.

Don't show how much it hurts you Jordan, I thought to myself as Sarah looked at me knowingly, don't let her see how much it affects you. She'll only use it to make you cry. I focussed on my breathing, watching as Sarah daintily ate her yoghurt, savouring every bite in front of me, her eyes glittering with mischief. I knew that look well. It meant she was up to something. I stood in the corner of the kitchen, wishing she would hurry up and leave. Maybe then, I could eat. My stomach gave another loud rumble. It lled the kitchen and my cheeks burned with embarrassment. Sarah had to have heard it. If she did, she gave no sign of it, munching on her fruit and toast as I salivated. I wasn't allowed to eat until every member of my family, which was Sarah and my father, had eaten rst. It has been drilled into me. So while I felt myself becoming impatient, I forced myself not to inhale the smell of the food.

Finally, when I thought that I couldn't take it anymore, Sarah nished and wiped her lips with the back of her hand. She dropped her spoon on the plate and stood up, leaving the dirty dishes for me to clean. She gave a small laugh as she saw the food still sitting there, c****g her head.

"Let me guess, you're hungry" she said sweetly "I heard your stomach growling earlier, just so you know. You're such a pig. Didn't you eat dinner last night?" she commented. "I think that should be enough for you. You don't need anymore food, what you need is exercise and to diet. It's embarrassing having a sister who looks like you."

Every word was like a dagger to the heart. I winced and bit my lip, hoping she would nish her tirade. She leaned forward, her dark eyes assessing me up and down. "You'll never be as pretty as I am or nd a mate. What mate is going to want someone who looks like you?" she added, ipping her hair over her shoulder.

Don't cry, don't cry, I told myself, even as my body began to tremble. She had just laid bare my biggest fear. Shifters have a sacred bond that's present only with their mate. They are ercely protective of them, and they love each other from the very second they lay eyes on each other. But they can also choose to reject their mate. The pain from that is excruciating as the bond breaks, and some shifters never really recover from the pain of being rejected from their other half. They either go rogue or go insane, their wolves losing their minds and the pack members are forced to put them down. I wanted with every bre of my being, to avoid being one of them.

What if that happened to me? I could feel myself panicking as Sarah gave me a twisted grin. I was bigger than other shifters, the rest of them all looking like supermodels. What if my mate took one look at me and decided then and there that I wasn't good enough? I had dreamed of a mate that came along and swept me off my feet, but there was always this dread inside of me at the prospect that Prince Charming might turn out to be a villain in disguise. The thought of being unloved and unwanted by my mate was enough to crush me. I paled and Sarah stuck the knife in deeper.

"No one cares about you, just so you know. Even if you nd a mate at eighteen, I guarantee they'll never want to set eyes on you again. Why don't you do us all a favour and kill yourself? At least that way you won't have to suffer the humiliation of a public rejection."

Breathe Jordan, breathe. In, out, in, out. My hands clenched into sts. My temper was fraying. I was barely holding it together.

"You don't know that" I whispered "my mate will love me no matter what" I told her and she threw back her head and laughed.

"Believe what you will" she shrugged "I'm just telling it like it is. Better not to get your hopes up" she said meanly "Your mate will probably be a lowly omega anyway. Wouldn't that be funny? An omega rejecting another omega."

"Yeah and I bet your mate rejects you when he nds out just what an evil b***h you are" I hissed, my body shaking in indignation.

Her mouth opped open. I felt a brief moment of satisfaction. I had managed to shock her. I didn't have time to gloat. Her hand snaked out and grabbed me around the throat, squeezing tightly, shutting off my ow of air to the lungs. I scrabbled at her hands. She narrowed her eyes at me as I kicked and ailed, my face turning blue. Her wolf was close to the surface and was giving her strength to overpower me. I could feel my vision becoming hazy.

"Listen you slut. My mate is going to be a powerful Alpha and I'm going to be Luna of the pack. I'm going to make Grant choose me, and there's nothing you can do about it" she snarled.

Can't breathe. I scratched at her arms. She towered over me, and with astonishing strength, maybe not that astonishing considering she was a shifter, she ung me into the cupboards. My body hit them with a thud, before sliding down to the oor in a daze. I could feel the beginnings of a lump on the back of my head.

"Don't you ever try and talk back to me" she said with venom in her voice "you're just a servant and so beneath me it's laughable. It's a shame that father hasn't killed you yet."

I watched with blurry eyes as she strode over to the leftover food. I was desperately sucking in air, but my heart skipped a beat when I saw her grab it.

"Don't" I wheezed, practically begging her and she giggled.

"You should be thanking me, you fat piece of s**t" she growled and then, as I watched, my eyes beginning to focus, she unceremoniously dumped the food into the bin right in front of me. She spat on it for good measure. It was repulsive. The bin stunk and was ready to be emptied today, so retrieving it wasn't an option. Why did she have to be so hateful?

My shoulder's slumped. That was to be my only food for the day until after school. I was going to have to go hungry for the whole day. Sarah slammed the empty plate down, almost breaking it. I inched and watched as she walked out of the kitchen without another word, the sound of the front door opening and closing as she left for school. I heard her car leaving. I was all alone in the house. I shakily got to my feet. I needed to get the dishes done and leave for school. Unlike Sarah, I had to walk and it was a fair distance away. Time wasn't on my side, I noticed anxiously. But as I washed the dishes, tears trailed down my cheeks even as I frantically tried to blink them away. I contented myself by daydreaming of a handsome prince who desperately fell in love with me, offering his hand in marriage. But fairy tales are just that, fairy tales, I thought sadly and reality was far, far harsher to cope with. I blinked my tears away, nished up, grabbed my backpack and left the house, beginning the long, hard, trek to school. Maybe Sarah had a point, I thought miserably, maybe I really should end my life. But a tiny part of me, wouldn't give up on the idea of nally leaving and nding my own pack to call home.